

Are you an organ donor?

Written by Mike Honda
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The National Minority Organ Donor Awareness Day is celebrated annually on August 1st to highlight the need for more organ and tissue donors among minority groups. There are many patients throughout the country who are awaiting organ or tissue transplants that may be the difference between a life free from invasive hospital visits and one that is constrained by various treatments, or worse, even death. By bringing awareness to this shortage, we can encourage more people to register as an organ and tissue donor, widening the pool of potential matches for current patients. Out of the 83,000 people currently on the national transplant waiting list, approximately 50 percent are minorities. However, minority donors only account for roughly 25 percent of the available donor pool. Because patients are more likely to find a genetically compatible match within their own racial or ethnic group, this discrepancy emphasizes the urgent need for more minority donors. The success rates will increase for transplants with a genetically compatible match, as the body is less likely to reject the organ and tissue. Becoming a donor requires [registering with the California donor registry](#) and a designation on your driver's license. You should also discuss this important decision with your family so that they are aware of your wishes. These few simple steps can help save up to 50 lives. More information is available on how to [become a donor](#). I also

recently signed on to the

[Health Equity and Accountability Act](#)

, which expands accessibility and increases data collection of health care for minorities. This bill is supported by the Tri-Caucus, a coalition of the Hispanic, Black, and Asian Pacific American Caucuses and is the result of seven years of collaboration. This legislation works to reduce health disparities in the minority communities through promotion of positive healthy behaviors. I strongly urge all those in our district to become donors. Your participation may someday make a life-saving organ transplant possible.